Isaku Natsume's

AMEIRO PARADOX DROP

Chapter 5

Nexus Scans
www.nexus-scans.com

Raw Provider: Jacey

Cleaner: Clovis

Translator: teetee

Typesetter: Clovis

Proofreader: gray alterego

Quality Control: gray alterego & rei1002

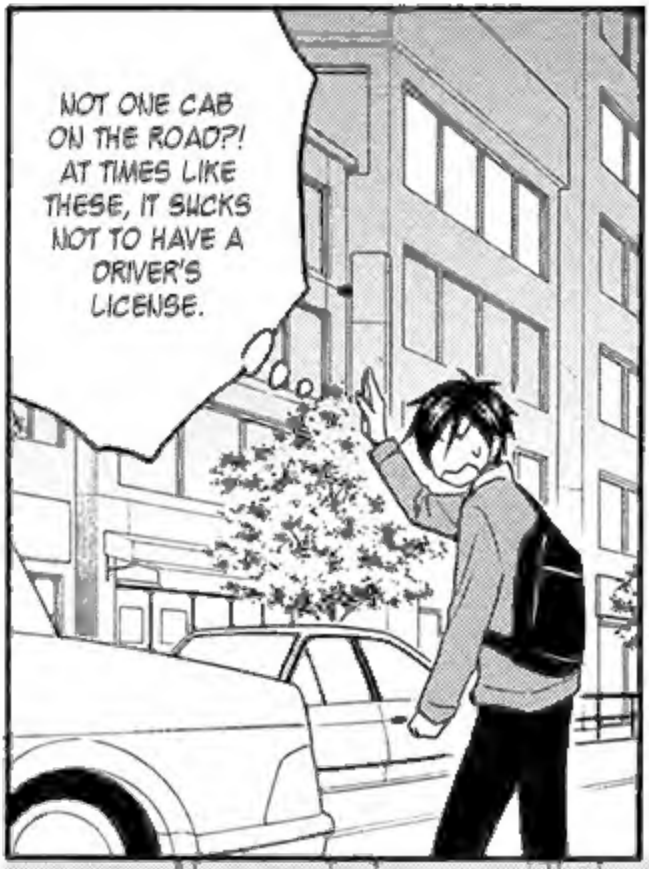
Drop.
05

HAH... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN...
IT WAS A FAKE TIP...
INTERVIEWING THE FEW RARE VILLAGERS I HAPPEN TO COME ACROSS.
WASTING THREE WHOLE DAYS,
SO HERE I AM.
BUT BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE ANY OTHER LEADS, I LISTENED TO KASAI - AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGMENT - ON THE SLIM POSSIBILITY THAT SUZUHARA MIGHT HAVE CHOSEN SUCH AN UNEXPECTED LOCATION SO SHE WOULDN'T BE RECOGNIZED.
IT WAS UNTHINKABLE FOR A HUGE CELEBRITY LIKE SUZUHARA TO EVER VOLUNTARILY STEP INTO THE BOONIES.

USE YOUR BRAIN, IDIOT.
KIUCHI-SAN
CALLING
HEY, YOU!
THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF A SUSPICIOUS FELLOW AROUND THESE PARTS LATELY. THAT YOU?!
I WAS QUESTIONED BY THE POLICE AT ONE POINT.
What are you doing to that kid there?
You're coming back to the station with me!
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU FELL FOR SUCH AN OBVIOUS LIE. GET BACK HERE RIGHT NOW!
ON MY WAY...
I've been waiting here for the bus for a while, though...!
THAT'S TRUE.
WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD SHE GO THERE? SHE LIKES EXCITEMENT, THE BUSTLING CROWDS!

YOOOO, ONOE!
ANOTHER WASTE OF A BEAUTIFUL DAY, HUH?
MY HUMBLEST APOLOGIES.
GRIND
TWIST
YEAH? AND HOW ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE UP FOR IT NOW?
SUZUHARA HAS HER REGULAR RECORDING SCHEDULED TODAY. I'LL LIE IN WAIT AT THE TV STATION AND FOLLOW HER FROM THERE!
GOOD! STAY ON YOUR TOES! IF YOU LET YOUR GUARD DOWN, OTHERS WILL BEAT US TO THE STORY!
YES, SIR!
DAMN IT! SO DAMN PISSED. PISSED AT MYSELF! PISSED AT KASAI!
FTV
I CAN'T FIGURE HIM OUT AT ALL. RIVALS OR NOT, DOES HE REALLY HATE ME THAT MUCH?
NEXT TIME I SEE HIM, HE'LL BE GETTING AN EARFUL FROM ME!
PING
PING

Shut up! How was it at your end? Could you request those days off?
Of course. Problem is you now.
SHUT UP! HOW WAS IT AT YOUR END? COULD YOU REQUEST THOSE DAYS OFF?
TAP TAP TAP TAP
KABURAGI
Heard people from the office say you went all the way to Tohoku. Must have been tough.
STUPID
I'LL GET IT EVEN IF IT COSTS ME MY LIFE.
GRR
HE'S RIGHT.
TAP TAP
AREN'T THEY THE CREW FROM SUZU-HARA'S TV SHOW? THEY MUST HAVE FINISHED RECORDING...
FTV
FTV

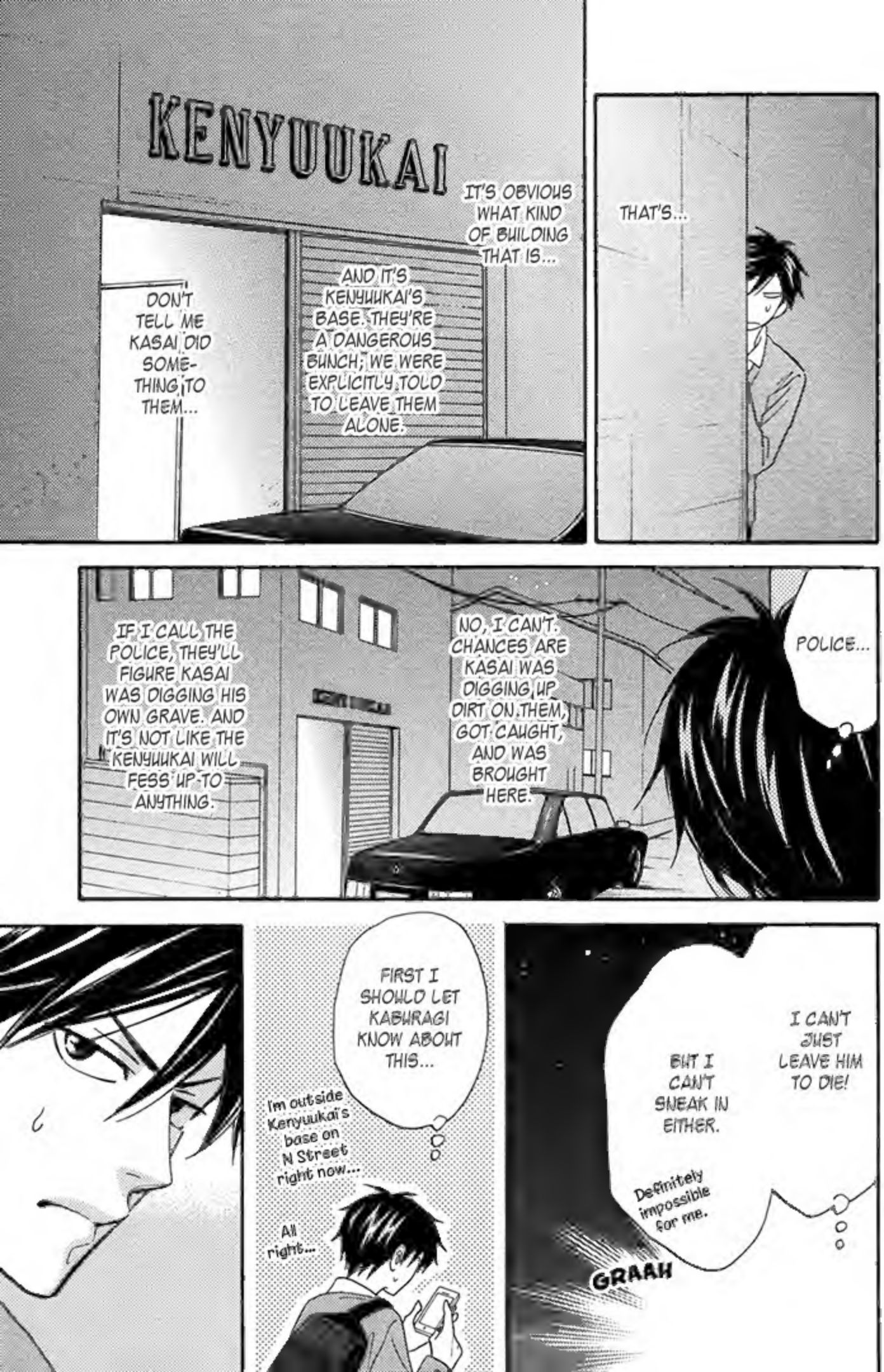

NOT ONE CAB ON THE ROAD?! AT TIMES LIKE THESE, IT SUCKS NOT TO HAVE A DRIVER'S LICENSE.

TAXI!
THAT MEANS HER CHAUFFEUR WILL COME PICK HER UP SOON!

WHA?
MAYBE THE CABS WILL PASS ON THIS SIDE OF THE ROAD MORE...

ATM
WAIT UP...
VROOO
MOO
SLAM
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
AH! TAXI!
TAXI
THAT WAS DEFINITELY KASAI...
EH?!?!?!
KARAOKE
EXCUSE ME, BUT CAN YOU FOLLOW THAT BLACK CAR IN FRONT?!
HAH?
MY ACQUAINT-ANCE WAS TAKEN AWAY!
WHAT IN THE WORLD DID THAT GUY DO?!

KENYUUKAI
UMM... CAN YOU... PLEASE JUST... GET OUT HERE...?
YEAH... GREAT. THANKS...


KENYUUKAI
IT'S OBVIOUS WHAT KIND OF BUILDING THAT IS...
AND IT'S KENYUUKAI'S BASE. THEY'RE A DANGEROUS BUNCH; WE WERE EXPLICITLY TOLD TO LEAVE THEM ALONE.
DON'T TELL ME KASAI DID SOME-THING TO THEM...
THAT'S...
IF I CALL THE POLICE, THEY'LL FIGURE KASAI WAS DIGGING HIS OWN GRAVE. AND IT'S NOT LIKE THE KENYUUKAI WILL FESS UP TO ANYTHING.
NO, I CAN'T. CHANCES ARE KASAI WAS DIGGING UP DIRT ON THEM, GOT CAUGHT, AND WAS BROUGHT HERE.
POLICE...
FIRST I SHOULD LET KABURAGI KNOW ABOUT THIS...
I'm outside Kenyuukai's base on N Street right now...
All right...
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM TO DIE!
BUT I CAN'T SNEAK IN EITHER.
Definitely impossible for me.
GRAAH

BUT IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE IF SOMETHING HAPPENS WHILE I'M OUT HERE WAITING FOR BACKUP!
EXCUSE ME!
WELL...
YOU SEE.. IT SEEMS LIKE... UH... A DIFFICULT COLLEAGUE OF OURS CAUSED YOU GUYS.... SOME TROUBLE...
SO I'LL JUST... UMM.. TAKE HIM OFF YOUR HANDS...
TOSS
SLAM

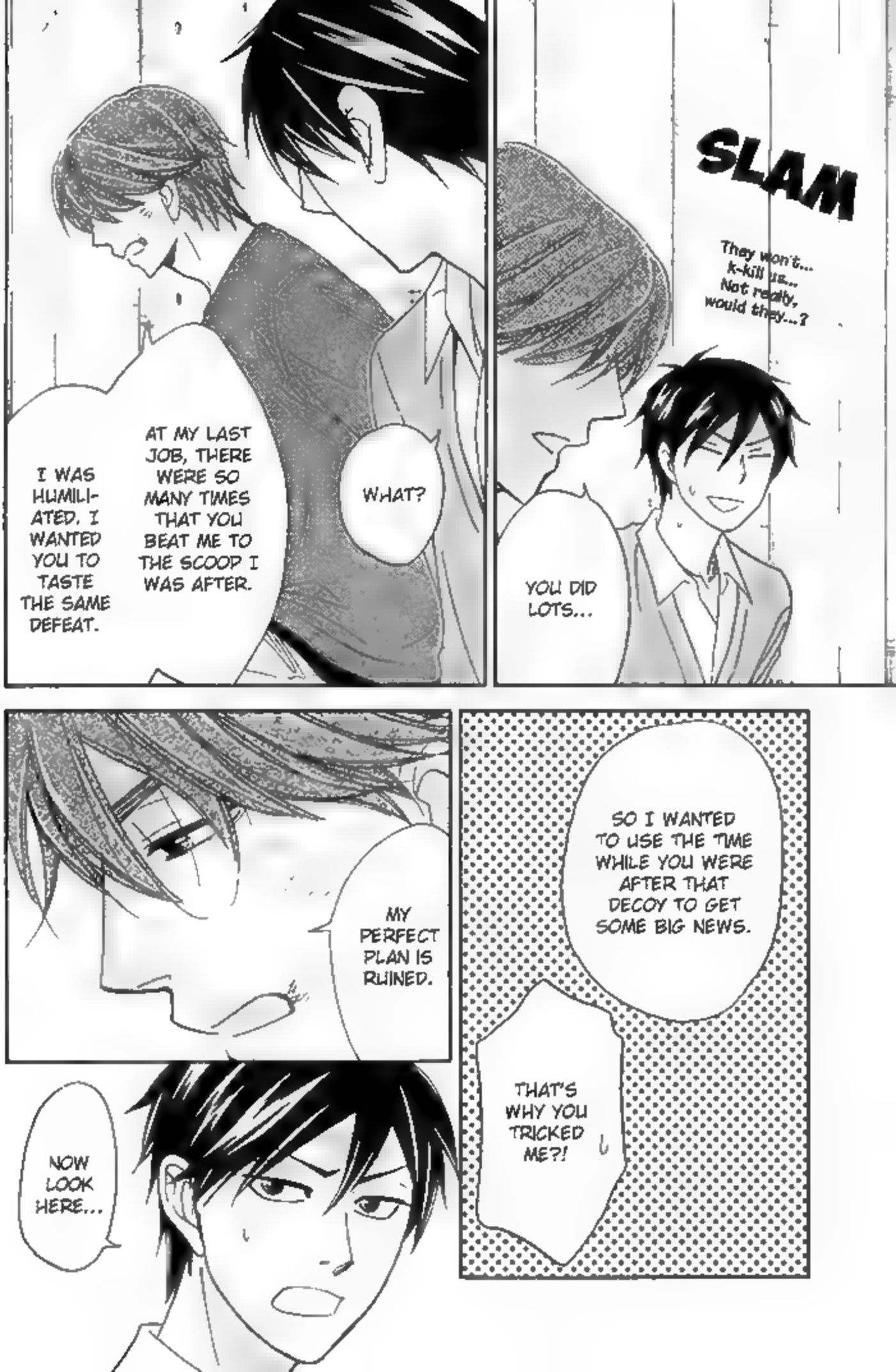
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?
I SHOULD BE THE ONE ASKING THAT!
WHAT...
..
THESE GUYS ARE NO JOKE! THE EDITORS SHOULD HAVE WARNED YOU ABOUT THEM!
HOW DID YOU GET YOURSELF KIDNAPPED?!
I WENT AFTER KENYUUKAI INTENTIONALLY.
I WAS TAILING ISHINABE KEN WHO HAPPENED TO HAVE TIES WITH THEM.
ISHINABE?!
He's a big fish!
BUT JUST ABOUT EVERYONE KNOWS HE'S INVOLVED WITH KENYUUKAI!
IT WASN'T LIKE...

BUT IF I COULD GET A SCOOP ON HIM, I'D HIT THE JACKPOT.
SO DID I...

THEN WHAT ABOUT YOU, ONOE-SAN? HOW DID YOU GET CAUGHT?
UGH
YOU SHOULD HAVE BACKED OFF BEFORE IT GOT TO THIS POINT.
RETREAT TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY AND WHATNOT

WHEN I SAW YOU GET SHOVED INTO A CAR. I FOLLOWED YOU.
I WAS STAKING OUT F TV STATION

DON'T GET ME STARTED, YOU CRUEL BASTARD!
I STILL OWE YOU A GOOD DRESSING DOWN!
I nearly forgot!
THE FACT THAT YOU'RE BACK MUST MEAN YOU FIGURED OUT I LIED ABOUT SUZUHARA.
THE OPERATIVE WORD IS "TRYING." AND IT'S NOT LIKE I ASKED YOU TO.
GOD... YOUR ATTITUDE IS JUST...
SO?!
AND HERE I WAS TRYING TO HELP YOU.
NAIVE.
AND YOU CAME TO SAVE THE SAME BASTARD WHO TRICKED YOU.
BAM
SHUT YOUR DAMN TRAPS OR I'LL BUTCHER YOU!
WHAT DID I EVER DO TO YOU-
TERRIBLY SORRY! WE'LL BE QUIET!

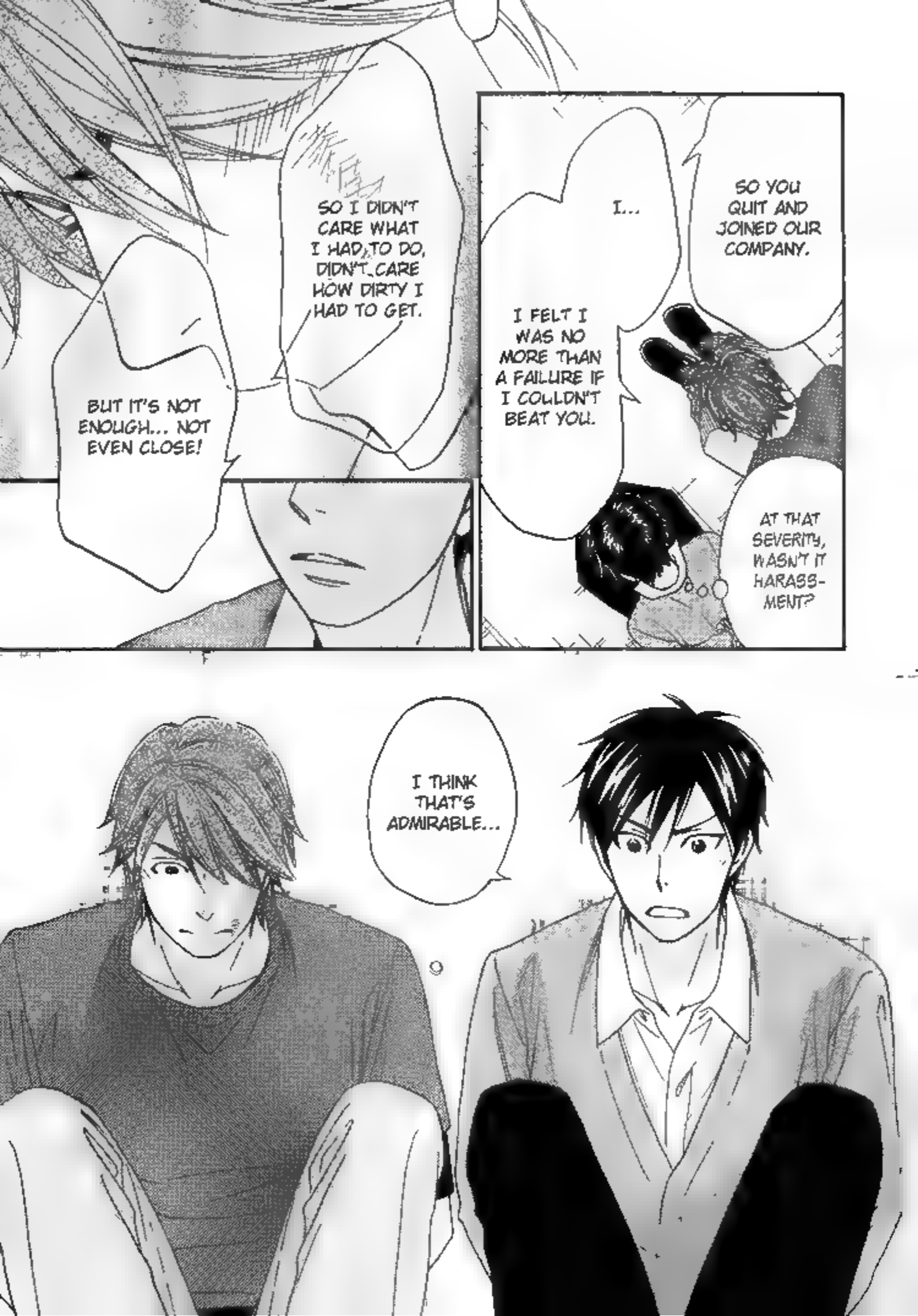

SLAM
They won't... k-kill us... Not really, would they...?
YOU DID LOTS...
WHAT?
I WAS HUMILI-ATED. I WANTED YOU TO TASTE THE SAME DEFEAT.
AT MY LAST JOB, THERE WERE SO MANY TIMES THAT YOU BEAT ME TO THE SCOOP I WAS AFTER.
MY PERFECT PLAN IS RUINED.
SO I WANTED TO USE THE TIME WHILE YOU WERE AFTER THAT DECOY TO GET SOME BIG NEWS.
THAT'S WHY YOU TRICKED ME?!
NOW LOOK HERE...

I DO, BUT
SINCE YOU KNOW-
IT JUST HAPPENED THAT THE LUCKY AND CAPABLE REPORTER ONCE MANAGED TO LAND MANY OF THE STORIES I WAS AFTER.
THERE'VE BEEN PLENTY OF TIMES ANOTHER NEWS AGENCY HAS BEATEN ME TO A STORY I WAS AFTER.
YOU'D HAVE YOUR HANDS FULL GOING AFTER EVERY ONE OF YOUR COMPETITORS.
And now you've landed yourself in a dangerous situation.
I KNOW...
AND THEN I'D GET TOLD OFF FOR BEING USELESS.
YOU'RE A WASTE OF SPACE AND SALARY
USELESS PIECE OF SHIT
FREELOADER
INCOMPETENT
YOU LOST ANOTHER LEAD, YOU IDIOT!

DON'T EVEN TRY TO COMPARE THEM! THE GUYS HERE ARE SO NICE.
BUT I GET TOLD THAT BY KABURAGI ALL THE TIME!
OH...

EVERY DAY, NO ONE WOULD TALK TO ME. ONLY GLARE AT ME WITH CONTEMPT.
Don't want to get on their nerves.
NICE?!
ACK... SHH! LOWER YOUR VOICE.

I RESOLVED TO GIVE IT MY ALL AND WAIT FOR THEM TO ACCEPT ME. I WORKED MY ASS OFF, BUT YOU KEPT STEALING THE NEWS RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER MY NOSE. I WAS SO TIRED OF HEARING YOUR NAME.
WHEN I DID GET A SCOOP, THEY'D COMPLAIN THAT IT WAS ABOUT SOMETHING INCONSEQUENTIAL. NOTHING I DID WAS ACKNOWLEDGED.


SO I DIDN'T CARE WHAT I HAD TO DO, DIDN'T CARE HOW DIRTY I HAD TO GET.
BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH... NOT EVEN CLOSE!
I...
SO YOU QUIT AND JOINED OUR COMPANY.
I FELT I WAS NO MORE THAN A FAILURE IF I COULDN'T BEAT YOU.
AT THAT SEVERITY, WASN'T IT HARASS-MENT?
I THINK THAT'S ADMIRABLE...

YOU PERSISTED AND WORKED HARD DESPITE EVERYTHING. THAT'S AMAZING.
I'M GLAD OUR EDITORS ARE EASYGOING GUYS.
IF I WERE YOU, I WOULD HAVE QUIT AGES AGO!
AND THOSE COWORKERS! RAILING AT YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T GET AN EXCLUSIVE OR SOMEONE BEAT YOU TO THE CHASE?! DON'T THEY KNOW THAT COMES WITH THE TERRITORY?
Since I mess up a lot...
YOU THINK I'M A FOOL, DON'T YOU...?
You're messing with me, right?
YOU...
If it were my last resort, I should be able to...
BUT YOU WERE ABLE TO DO IT.
BUT THEN, I MIGHT NOT HAVE HAD THE COURAGE TO RESIGN. JOB HUNTING IS A PAIN IN THE ASS...

EVER SINCE YOU JOINED, I'VE BEEN IN THE HOT SEAT!
HAH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?!
I'VE HAD TO WORK EXTRA HARD SINCE SUCH A STRONG RIVAL CAME IN.
I HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE!
SLAM
DONE YAPPING YET, YOU SHITS?!
HAAAAH?!
FLINCH
TERRIBLY, HORRIBLY SORRY!!!

WHAT?
ANIKI!!!
We'll be quiet for real this time.
NEED ME TO SHUT YOUR MOUTHS FOR YA?!

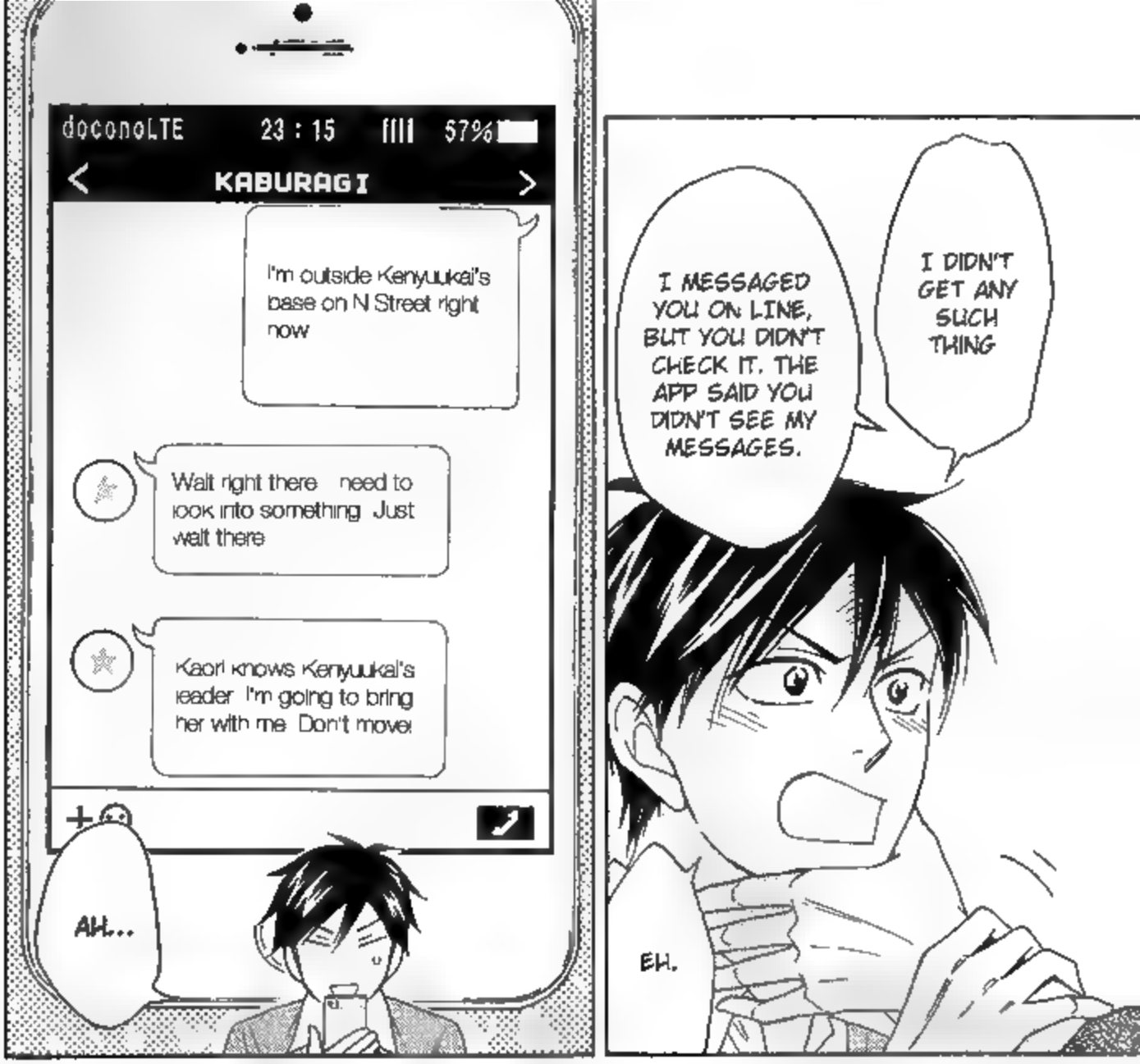
SLAM
UGH...

SWING
That's true.
!!!
Jasp
IF I HAD A PLAN, I WOULDN'T BE STUCK HERE WITH YOU!
DIDN'T YOU HAVE A PLAN WHEN YOU STARTED THIS RESCUE MISSION?
DUNNO...
HOW WILL THIS END FOR US?

GET OUT
YOUR BAIL IS HERE
EH
?
PRESS
KABU-RAGI (SAN) ?!!

EEEH?!
WHAT- WHY? WHY WOULD THEY LET US OFF JUST LIKE THAT?
YEAH, YEAH. JUST GET OUT.
I APOLOGIZE FOR CAUSING YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE.
YIKES, HE'S REALLY PISSED.
HOW DID YOU GET
KAORI-SAN?!
LONG TIME NO SEE, ONOE-KUN.

REALLY?! THANK YOU SO MUCH!
NO PROBLEM. AFTER ALL, I'D FEEL HORRIBLE IF YOU WERE BURIED SOMEWHERE.
GAH.
WHY ARE YOU HERE?!
OH, YOU COULD SAY THAT THE BOSS AND I ARE ACQUAINTANCES.
SHE APPEALED ON MY BEHALF SO THAT I COULD GET YOU TWO IDIOTS OUT.
YOU TWO...
SQUEEZE
FUUUH
YOU KNEW GETTING INVOLVED WITH THAT GROUP WAS DANGEROUS!
MMH
YET YOU IGNORED MY INSTRUCTIONS AND CHARGED INTO THEIR HEADQUARTERS ALONE. YOU FUCKING DUMBASS!
INPHRUCTIONS?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KABURAGI
I'm outside Kenyuukai's base on N Street right now
Wait right there need to look into something Just wait there
Kaori knows Kenyuukai's leader I'm going to bring her with me Don't move!
AH...
I MESSAGED YOU ON LINE, BUT YOU DIDN'T CHECK IT. THE APP SAID YOU DIDN'T SEE MY MESSAGES.
I DIDN'T GET ANY SUCH THING
EH.

THAWWY.
Sorry.
DON'T YOU "AH" ME. DON'T SAY WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY AND THEN IGNORE MY RESPONSE. YOU IDIOT!
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE STILL IN ONE PIECE.
ANOTHER THING:
YOU HAVE TO KEEP ISHINABE KEN'S SCANDALS OUT OF THE NEWS.

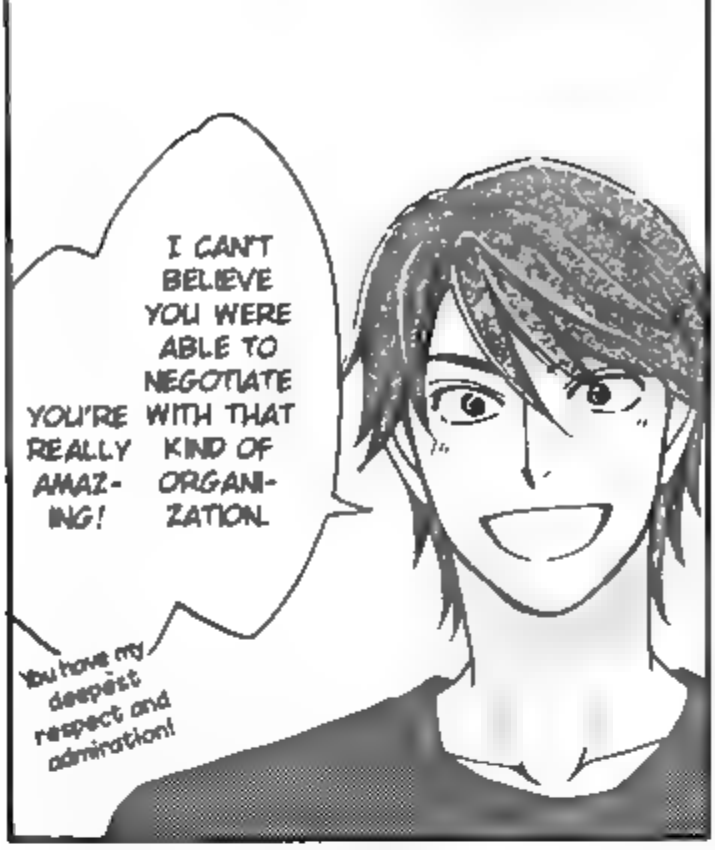
YOU'RE INVESTIGATING ISHINABE-SAN'S ILLEGITIMATE SON, RIGHT?
WHAT? ISHINABE HAS AN ILLEGITIMATE SON?!
And he acts like he's an honorable man.
WELL... IN SOME CIRCLES, IT'S COMMON KNOWL-EDGE.
BUT BECAUSE HE HAS STRONG SUPPORT, NO ONE WANTS TO PRESS THE MATTER.
HEH... SO EVERYONE KNOWS BUT IS JUST HOLDING BACK?
OF COURSE. THE PHOTOS YOU TOOK WERE CONFISCATED, RIGHT?
DON'T DIG INTO THIS ANY-MORE.
I ASSURED THEM THAT YOU'D DROP THE STORY AND FORGET ABOUT THE WHOLE THING. THAT WAS THEIR CONDITION FOR LETTING YOU FREE.
PROMISE YOU'LL LET IT GO, OKAY?

CAN WE TRUST THIS KID? BECAUSE IF WE CAN'T, WE MIGHT AS WELL TURN BACK AROUND AND HAND HIM OVER TO KENYUUKAI.
SAY,
EH?
I GOT IT...
NO NEED TO WORRY.
HE'S ACTUALLY VERY RELIABLE.
HE'LL KEEP HIS PROMISE
IS THAT SO?

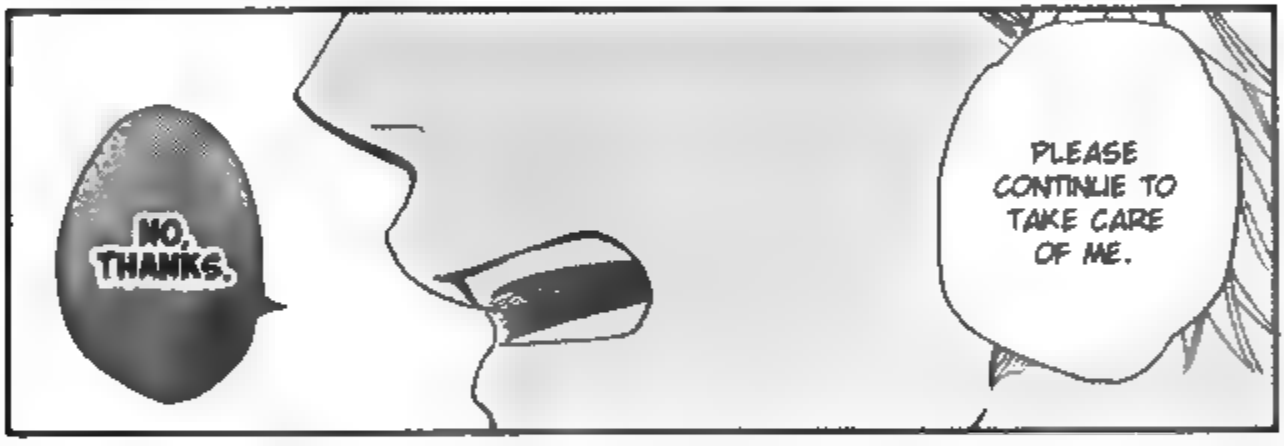
SHUKANSHA
FINE. AND IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, ONOE-KUN WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE.
EHH?!
OI, KASAI! YOU BETTER NOT TRY ANYTHING FUNNY!
HAH... FINALLY BACK SAFE AND SOUND.
WERE YOU WAITING HERE THIS WHOLE TIME?
WE NEARLY FAINTED WHEN KABU TOLD US WHAT HAPPENED.
WE WERE WORRIED SICK!
REALLY ...
I'M BEGGING YOU, KASAI. DON'T BREAK ANY MORE OF OUR INDUSTRY'S RULES.
!

KABU, YOU WORKED HARD TOO.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!
NO PROB-LEM.
I'M GOING HOME NOW. I'M BEAT.
SINCE YOU'VE ALREADY REFLECTED ON YOUR ACTIONS, IT'S FINE.
YES! I WAS WRONG!
IF THE EDITOR SAYS IT'S FINE, THEN IT'S ALL GOOD!
HAHA. WHY WOULD WE LET GO OF TALENT LIKE YOURS?
WAS THAT IT? THE LECTURE IS. . OVER? NO WARNINGS OR DISMISSAL...?
YEAH?
UMM... IS THAT...
Always jumping the gun.
Uh... but...
BECAUSE YOU JUST CHARGED IN WITHOUT FORE-THOUGHT OR PLANNING.
Eh?
WHY ME?!
BUT THEN AGAIN, ONCE, YOU'RE STILL IN TROUBLE.

...YOU GUYS ARE GETTING ALONG.
I did! I thought having two of us face the enemy was better than one!
Like more strength in numbers?
So what did you accomplish in the end?
Uahh...
I...
I FEEL STUPID, MAKING A FUSS AND COMPETING BY MYSELF.
OH.
YEAH...
EVERY TIME I SAW YOU TWO TOGETHER, YOU GUYS WERE ARGUING.
IT'S LIKE...
ONOE-SAN IS IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT LEAGUE!


I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WERE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THAT KIND OF ORGANIZATION.
YOU'RE REALLY AMAZING!
You have my deepest respect and admiration!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TODAY, KABURGI-SAN!
Oh.
THIS KID


NO, THANKS.
PLEASE CONTINUE TO TAKE CARE OF ME.

I HATE DRAGGING JUNIORS ALONG. SUCH A PAIN.
AND

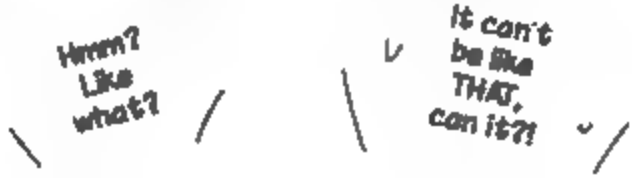
HUH...?

DON'T PULL ONOE INTO ANY MORE OF YOUR HARE-BRAINED SCHEMES.
OR I'LL TAKE YOU TO KENYUUKAI PERSONALLY.
Within reason, of course.
SO DON'T GET INTO ANY TROUBLE.
UH..?
Y-YEAH OKAY.
I'll be careful.
NOT GOING TO LET YOU GET CLOSE TO HIM
That was dangerous.
ONOE! LET'S GO!
I'm heading home, then.
Ha ha ha
Uhuhu. Kuchi-san is so mean.

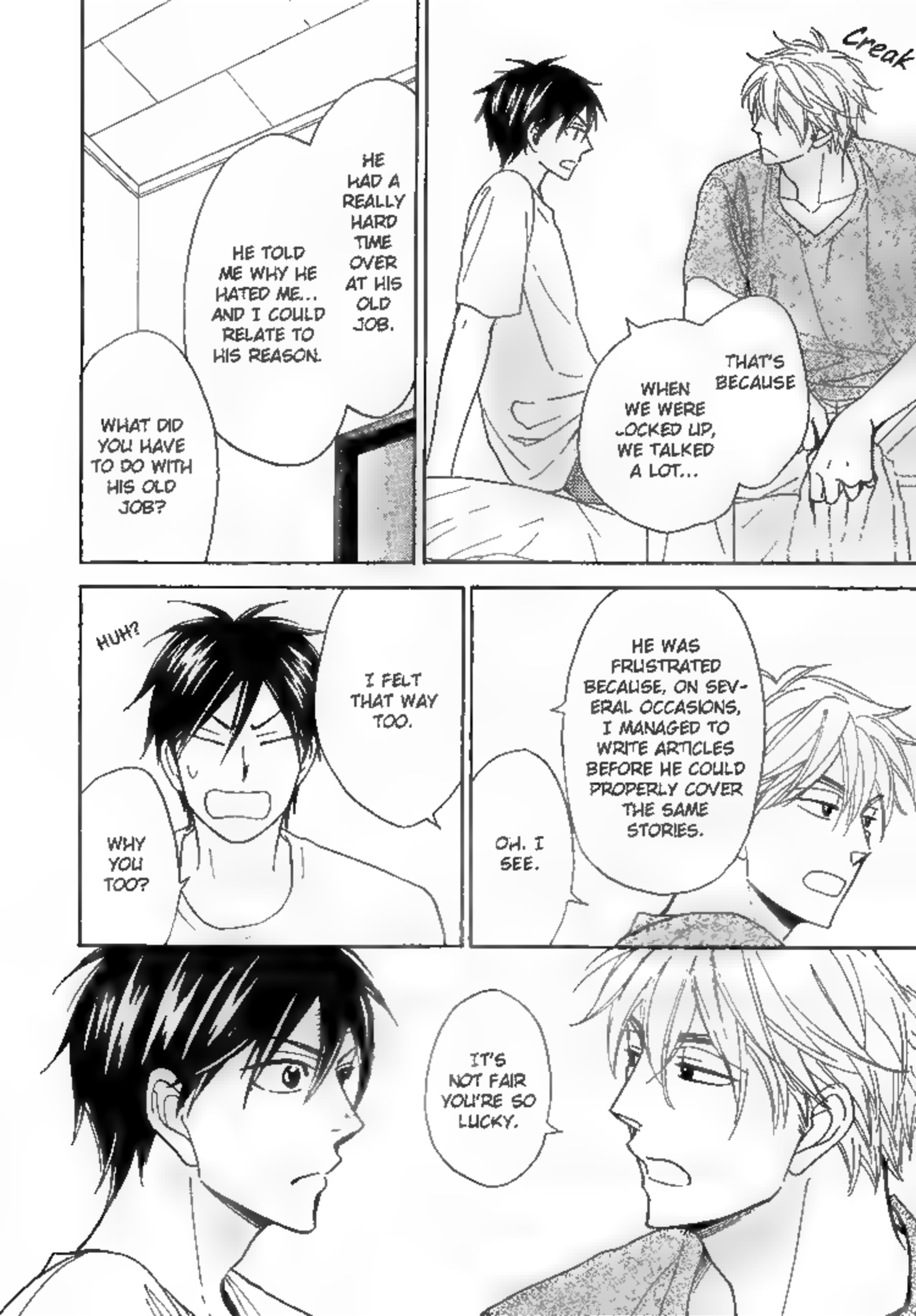
I WON'T. GOOD WORK TODAY!
OH! ONOE, DON'T BE LATE TOMORROW!
WE'... TAKE OUR LEAVE. GOOD NIGHT

SOMETIMES THEY STAY OVER AT EACH OTHER'S PLACE.
YEAH KABU GIVES HIM A RIDE HOME.
THEY LEAVE TOGETH-ER...?

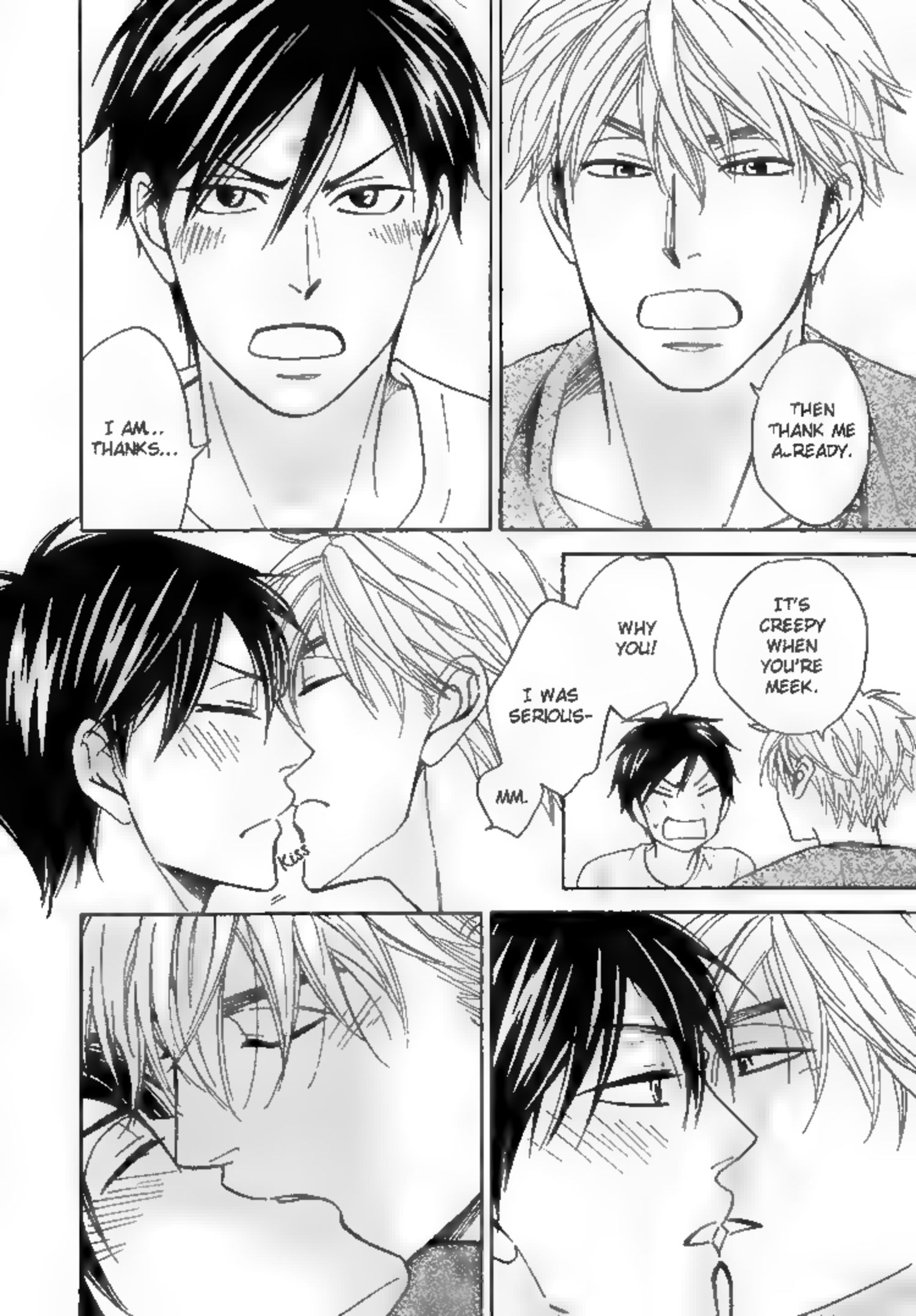
WAIT! WHAT KIND OF RELA-TIONSHIP?!
AH A HARMON-OUS RELA-TIONSHIP
All in all, it's a good thing.
NOT SURE HOW IT HAPPENED. THEY SEEM LIKE POLAR OPPOSITES, BUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP IS REALLY HARMONIOUS.
WHY ?
HUH?


Hmm? Like what?
It can't be like THAT, can it?!

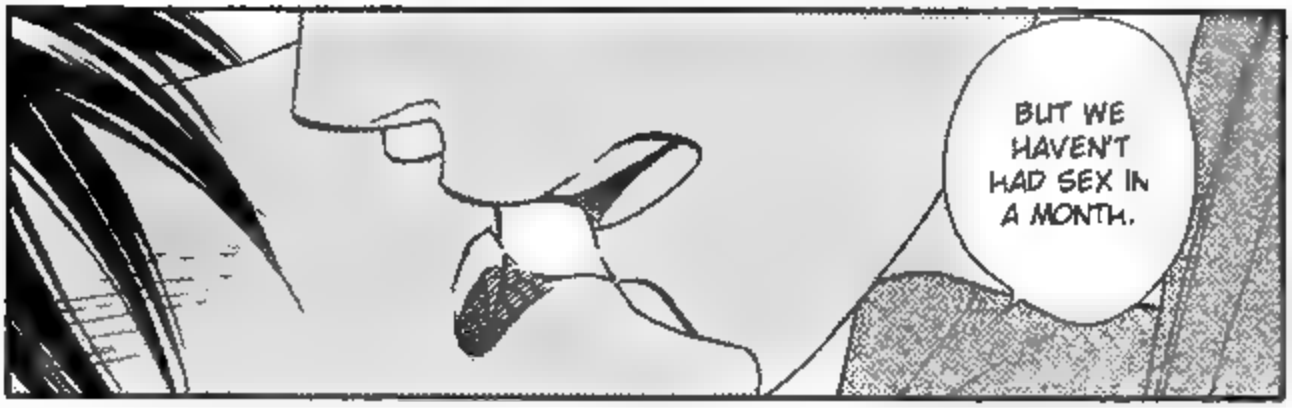
ARRGHHH. I'M BEAT!
FLOP
THIS DAY LASTED FOREVER.
AH
YOU CAME BACK FROM TOHOKU TODAY, RIGHT?
YEAH
And then to Kenyuukai.
YOU WERE COMPLETELY FOOLED BY KASAI, HUH?
EXACTLY! MY WHOLE DAY OF SUFFERING WAS ALL BECAUSE OF HIM. DAMN HIM!
AND NOW YOU GUYS ARE ALL BUDDY BUDDY?


HE HAD A REALLY HARD TIME OVER AT HIS OLD JOB.
HE TOLD ME WHY HE HATED ME... AND I COULD RELATE TO HIS REASON.
WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO DO WITH HIS OLD JOB?
Creak
THAT'S BECAUSE
WHEN WE WERE LOCKED UP, WE TALKED A LOT...
HE WAS FRUSTRATED BECAUSE, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, I MANAGED TO WRITE ARTICLES BEFORE HE COULD PROPERLY COVER THE SAME STORIES.
OH. I SEE.
I FELT THAT WAY TOO.
HUH?
WHY YOU TOO?
IT'S NOT FAIR YOU'RE SO LUCKY.

POKE
JUST LIKE TODAY,
YOU REALLY THINK SO?
So the people who keep falling obviously would envy you.
YOU MIGHT BUMP INTO WALLS OR FALL INTO POTHOLES ALONG THE WAY, BUT YOU ALWAYS SUCCEED IN FINISHING THE JOB.
...
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU IF I HADN'T MADE IT IN TIME?
Kiss
NOT EXACTLY, BUT I'M SURE IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN GOOD...


I AM.. THANKS...
THEN THANK ME ALREADY.
KISS
I WAS SERIOUS-
MM.
WHY YOU!
IT'S CREEPY WHEN YOU'RE MEEK.

Pant
DIDN'T YOU SAY WE HAD TO REST?
YEAH. IT'S LATE.
You're tired. Aren't you?


BUT WE HAVEN'T HAD SEX IN A MONTH.

Ah.
Nn.
Pant

I'M TAKING IT
THIS SLOW.
THRUST
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY
THRUST
THRUST
STOP
tremble
tremble
tremble
WA.T-
AH!-
A M.NUTE
haa
WAIT...?
hanh
gasp
gasp
FAST.
SHUT UP!
It's been a while!
can't help it!!
BUT I'M NOT DONE, SO
AH!

CREAK

HMM?
SQUEEZE

YEAH?
I JUST REMEMBER-
NO-
THING!
WHAT IS IT?
THROB
THROB

SHIVER
AH!
THRUST
CLENCH
AAH!
Slide

CREAK
THRUST
Nh!
SLAM
CREAK
Ahh!
hah
SLAM
Ah!
pant
Mm...
hah
Nn.
Mmf.

"I LOVE HIM."

"I REALLY, REALLY LOVE HIM,"
I SECRETLY THOUGHT.

Ha.
Haaa aaaa hh... ...
...SHIT.
HOW AM I GOING TO GET UP TOMORROW?
pant
WELL...
OUR VACATION IS IN THREE DAYS.
HANG IN THERE.
!

tremble
Shit.
DID YOU THINK OF WHERE YOU WANT TO GO?
YOU ALL RIGHT...?
...
HAH?!
AT THIS RATE, I DON'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO ASK FOR VACATION TIME.
I DON'T HAVE ANY LEADS ON SUZUHARA.
THIS IS WHEN YOU SHOULD BE PUTTING THAT LUCK OF YOURS TO USE!
AND HOW, EXACTLY?!
You're no help at all
END